

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editor.*

SIR,

### EMIGRATION AFTER THE WAR.

I have read with much interest your letter of April 25th *re* women's emigration.

On the "Empire Settlement Committee" I steadily urged upon the English and the Colonial representatives the need of providing facilities for the emigration of self-supporting women, wives, sisters, or fiancées, *pari passu* with the ex-soldiers, and of similar social classes. I found that the Agents-General were very shy of proposals to introduce *educated* women. They considered that, broadly speaking, they had a superfluity of townswomen; that, on the whole, the openings for educated women could be filled by Colonial-born women on the spot—that the better class English-woman was usually a helpless person as a settler; that there is a disastrous tendency amongst educated wives and daughters (whether Colonial or British) to shirk the hardships and occupations of life outside the towns, and either to draw their husbands or fathers into town occupations, or to make their own homes in the towns, and leave their menfolk to struggle on with hired male labour, visiting their families at intervals.

Owing to family connections I know a good deal of the conditions of settlement in Australia and Tasmania 70 years ago, my grandfather (Sir John Franklin) having been Governor of the latter. The most successful settlers and their wives were country-bred, the educated children of squires or parsons, and they prospered greatly. But they and their children took the "rough-and-tumble" of station life as a matter of course, and when wealth came to them they stuck to the active life which they loved.

Now I find the girls of the third generation drift back into the towns, living useless lives with dwindling means. They are physically and mentally idle. Consequently, I can appreciate the Colonial objection to any important immigration of educated women, whether married or unmarried, and the preference for the farm-servant; or failing that, the maid-of-all-work; since either of these will make station-life and settlement, whether in Australia or Canada, less trying to Colonial wives, and will provide wives for miners, stockmen, etc.

I nevertheless urged strongly the detrimental effect upon the Race, if it was to be mainly the progeny of the English uneducated and unintelligent lower class, and I begged the Committee not to reject the present opportunity of bringing in the higher strains of intelligence and education as mothers of the future population. I think this point was fully appreciated.

Now as to practical measures:—

(1) I think we should not *stimulate* in any way the emigration of wives or fiancées who are not qualified to take up *on arrival* the full work that falls upon a wife in Colonial life, whether in town or country. Such emigrants, unless they are already hard-working women, should spend, say, three months here in conditions similar to those which await them. Many settlers have been broken down by the inexperience and incompetence of their wives, which often result in chronic ill-health.

In reality, it is better that *the settler should find his mate in the Colony*—one who already knows local conditions; yet this is only possible if means are found to send out single women for independent self-supporting employment.

(2) It may be assumed that there is no limit to the demand for farm-servant girls, and as a rule the maids-of-all-work can be placed.

In these classes it is chiefly organisation that is needed :—

(a) To pull out of factories or town service farm-girls who have drifted into town-life and do not like it. Posters and handbills and cinematographs would do much.

(b) Dépôts in each Colony are needed to keep a register of employers, all thoroughly approved and willing to be visited by lady inspectors, and also willing to pay all or part of the passage money (which should be advanced by the dépôt), paying the girl only part of her wages for, say, two years, and the balance to the dépôt as a refund.

(3) Still, as above mentioned, these girls do not solve the whole problem. They do not represent our best breeds or provide suitable mates for educated men—whether immigrants or Colonials. In South Africa and Rhodesia much has been done to bring in educated, self-supporting women for the following employments :—

(a) Teachers in schools and families.

(b) Trained nurses (with midwifery certificates) for hospitals, nursing homes, and private cases.

(c) Civil Service clerks, shorthand typists, accountants, and secretaries in business offices, railways, etc.

(d) Assistants in retail shops, dressmakers.

(e) Dispensers in hospitals and chemist shops.

(f) Dairy and fruit farming.

Amongst such emigrants the nurses (b) have been very valuable. Most marry in due course, and thus establish up and down the country an ever-increasing number of women who understand hygiene and are competent to deal with accident or sickness or childbirth. The value of such knowledge amid a sparse population is incalculable, and I venture to hope that such mothers will pass on their experience to their daughters and establish good hygienic traditions for future generations.

At the conclusion of Peace large numbers of military nurses will be liberated with only a *one-sided* training, i.e., the *surgical* treatment of *men*. There will be Colonial women amongst them. It would be an immense support to Colonial settlement if various Colonies would encourage the best of these nurses (under 30 and in good health) to undergo specially arranged courses of *medical* and midwifery training to complete their qualification. I assume that only nurses will be selected whose *surgical* experience is certified, so that the courses need not be long. Such women would then be engaged for the Colonial Government Service of Hygiene on the understanding that (subject to adequate pay) they would be employed primarily for public hospitals or district nursing, so far as vacancies arise, but also would be utilised in any department of public health, e.g., inspection of schools and institutions, care of female immigrants, teaching of hygiene, laboratory work, according to their capacities and the public requirements. Doubtless the hospitals would also provide private nurses from their staffs. These women might also be utilised under (e) as dispensers, etc.

Women thus trained would be rapidly married to Colonials and immigrants of the educated class, and would make invaluable wives. It should be a "short service" employment terminable at the end of five years or on marriage.

As regards the other possible occupations mentioned above, I am not sure whether, outside South Africa, (a), (c), and (d) would be welcomed. Possibly there are sufficient women on the spot for these employments, though there may be a limited demand for high-class private governesses.

(4) I believe, however, that our past difficulties in providing educated help-meets for educated settlers have been almost swept away by the creation of the land-workers, V.A.D.'s, and other women services during

the war. For the first time we shall be confronted by thousands of unoccupied women of all classes, many of whom are now qualified to step straight into a settler's home and share its duties as wife or helper, while thousands more will be competent practical workers who lack no qualification which cannot be readily acquired.

Adhering to my view that even these women will make better wives if not married until both they and their husbands have some Colonial experience, we must ask "by what means can they obtain this?" The solution will require care and organisation if a flow of competent, self-supporting women is to be maintained.

It is recognised that one of the gravest obstacles to healthy pioneer land settlement is the often crushing burden thrown upon the young wife and mother, resulting in failure, or the exclusion of marriage and of offspring, or the back-flow of the women to town life. The impossibility of securing competent and congenial help for the wife is largely responsible for this. The service available has been scanty, rough, ignorant, and costly, because incompetent. Besides, the conditions involve a close intercourse between employer and employed, and unless it can be congenial the home is spoilt.

It ought not to be impossible to form in this country a Register of land-workers and others who will be prepared to accept selected situations for, say, a year at a moderate wage *in order to acquire local experience*. There is little doubt that women whose competency is recognised will be in request as wives and soon settle down. The Register would record the experience of the applicants, and their "provenance" and education. The registrar would add her confidential notes as to "status," etc., for the guidance of the Colonial depôt. Meanwhile, in each Colony the Government must put out advertisements inviting applications for assistants on farms, stating the previous experience of land workers and others. Applicants would be asked (preferably in conversation) to supply information as to the "status" desired in an assistant, and if possible, the farm should be visited by a local correspondent. (A lady of the proposed Hygiene Service could do this, or a schoolmistress or clergyman's wife.)

With these details from both sides, it should be possible to bring the right people together.

It should be assumed that assistance could only be provided for married women, and references must be satisfactory. Some woman within reach who recommends the house must undertake to keep in touch with the newcomer. Difficulties, doubtless, will arise; that is to be expected. But with care the percentage should be small. There must always be a place to which a girl can retreat.

It must be remembered that on many farms the sons or husbands will have fallen, and that the parents or the widow will have to bring into their homes *someone* to assist. Young men will be scarce, and often a *competent* and companionable woman will be more acceptable. Every competent woman so placed will foster the demand for others, and marriages will maintain the flow.

(5) These are the main suggestions I would submit. Obviously they imply the creation by the Imperial Government of the Emigration Executive Board recommended in our Report, and also corresponding depôts or bureaus in the Colonies. The Imperial and Colonial Governments must be willing to provide a moderate expenditure, and provided the Empire is henceforward to be *one* Commonwealth—though not otherwise—all parties will profit. Generally speaking, the Colony ought to advance travelling expenses, etc., and provide hostels for reception. The expenses should be added to the wages, but the employer should deduct them in instalments from the employee's pay, and *remit the deductions to the bureau*. When expenses are thus advanced from public funds, the

women ought to be indentured to the Government, and to serve at scale wages in the situation arranged, until the money has been repaid. Repayment in full should liberate them at any time.

It is usually found that the cost of the journey is a serious and often a decisive obstacle to women.

(6) As regards the question of intermarriage, I have no special information. In South Africa, as in India, there has been much intermarriage—usually, but not always, concubinage—between white men and Kaffir women—not much, I believe, as regards Hottentot and Bushwomen. The Boers and Portuguese and Germans have no scruples on this head. The Englishman with buff-coloured children round his farm loses caste, and is usually on the down grade. The most remarkable point is the rapidity with which the black race absorbs and effaces any strain of foreign blood. For many centuries foreigners, Jews, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, English (in a small degree), and Germans, have had children by Kaffir concubines, but they have left little trace on the natives, though now and then—as in the late Chief Lewanika—the higher strain suddenly reasserts itself. He was a pathetic hybrid between a Kaffir and an Arab, but his sons reverted. In Cape Colony there has been considerable intermarriage between Asiatic immigrants and Kaffirs. It would be interesting to ascertain whether the Asiatic strain survives amongst these half-breeds, or whether here also it is effaced by the prepotency of negroid blood.

As to fertility, the Boers south of the Vaal have large families, but I think their families dwindle as they spread into the Tropics. In Rhodesia the native population grows rapidly under our "Pax Britannica," but individual women do not bear many children. We have reduced the native death-rate enormously, and, of course, have suppressed overt infanticide and tribal feuds.

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*To the Editor.*

SIR,

SALVATION ARMY EMIGRATION.

The governing principles of the Salvation Army's emigration policy, as laid down by its founder, are as follows:—That the migration, transfer, transplantation, or whatever term may be used, should be:—

- (1) Helpful to the individual,
- (2) Acceptable to the Old Land,
- (3) Advantageous to the New Country.

The Salvation Army Emigration Department was founded in 1903, and its system of organisation has proved extremely practical. Its services have been used by the various Overseas Governments in their colonising schemes, and by other administrative bodies. Since its inception it has been responsible for the settlement of nearly 100,000 people in the Overseas Dominions. Out of this number less than one per cent. have proved failures.

The department advises enquirers as to their suitability, encouraging no one to emigrate who does not conform to the standards of suitability and fitness established by its long experience. It gives advice in regard to localities, conditions of living, and employment. It escorts its passengers across the seas, finds work for them, ensures them against unemployment, and overlooks their progress until they are properly established. The Army exercises special care over women and children proceeding abroad and offers exceptional facilities for their comfort in